THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 1978
PART V

FEDERAL REGISTER

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT

Statement of Interpretation and Enforcement Policy; Notification of Substantial Risk

[6560-01]

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL 849-2]

TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT

Notification of Substantial Risk Under Section 8(e)

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Statement of interpretation and enforcement policy.

SUMMARY: This action states EPA's interpretation of, and enforcement policy concerning, section 8(e) of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) (90 Stat. 2029, 15 U.S.C. 2607). The provisions of that section went into effect on January 1, 1977.

Section 8(e) states that "any person who manufactures, processes, or distributes in commerce a chemical substance or mixture and who obtains information which reasonably supports the conclusion that such substance or mixture presents a substantial risk of injury to health or the environment shall immediately inform the Administrator of such information unless such person has actual knowledge that the Administrator has been adequately informed of such information."

DATES: The policy expressed in this document is in effect as of the date of publication.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Frank D. Kover, Assessment Division, Office of Toxic Substances (WH-557), Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20460, 202-755-2110.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On September 9, 1977, the Agency proposed guidance (42 FR 45362) on its interpretation of and policy concerning the provisions of section 8(e). Although the proposed "guidance" was an interpretive rule and statement of policy exempt from the notice and public comment provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553), the Agency solicited comments on several issues to make more informed decisions. On October 11, the comment period was extended from October 15 to October 31, 1977 (42 FR 54857). On November 4, 1977, a supplemental notice to the proposed guidance was published (42 FR 57744), deleting the November 15 date for reporting certain information obtained before 1977 and stating that a new date would be established in the final guidance.

In developing this policy statement, two meetings have been held (February 1, 1977, and October 26, 1977) with selected representatives of industry and environmental and other interested groups. Comments submitted pursuant to the February 1 meeting were addressed in the preamble to the September 9 proposal. Over 100 written comments have been submitted pursuant to the September 9 proposal from trade associations, businesses, environmental groups, labor unions, State and Federal agencies, and other interested parties. Appendix B describes significant issues raised in these comments and the Agency's response to them.

The major modifications to the September 9 proposal are summarized in points 1 through 7 below.

(1) Pursuant to some question over the definition and nature of "guidance," this document is now described more accurately as a "policy statement." It is exempt from the notice and public comment provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, as well as provisions concerning delayed effective dates.

(2) Many commenters expressed the view that to apply these requirements to officers and employees of a business organization would result in ill-considered, premature reports and would unfairly subject employees to conflicting responsibilities as individual respondents and as corporate agents. Other commenters expressed support for the view that certain employees have a responsibility to report pertinent information, and felt that the phrase "capable of appreciating pertinent information" appropriately described those employees.

The September 9 proposal would have applied section 8(e) requirements to commercial establishments as well as to employees capable of appreciating pertinent information, but stipulated enforcement priorities intended to encourage corporate processing and centralized reporting of such information (42 FR 45363). The intent was to ensure that pertinent information obtained by employees is promptly and appropriately considered, while minimizing duplicative or ill-considered submissions.

The Agency now feels that these objectives would best be served by allowing commercial establishments—under certain conditions designed to ensure full disclosure—to assume exclusive responsibility for reporting to EPA any substantial-risk information obtained by individual officers or employees. Accordingly, this policy statement stipulates that individual officers and employees will have fully discharged their section 8(e) obligations once they have notified the designated responsible company supervisor or official of pertinent information, *provided*, that the employing company or firm has established, internally publicizes, and affirmatively implements procedures governing such notifications. These procedures, at a minimum, must: (1) Specify the information that must be reported; (2) indicate how the notifications are to be prepared and submitted; (3) note the Federal penalties for failing to report; and (4) provide a mechanism for promptly notifying officers and employees who have submitted reports of the company's disposition of those reports, including whether or not they were submitted to EPA (and if not, informing employees of their right to report to EPA, as protected by TSCA section 23). EPA believes these four criteria will ensure prompt and appropriate processing of pertinent information.

Establishment of such procedures notwithstanding, all officials responsible and having authority for the organization's execution of its section 8(e) obligations retain personal liability for ensuring that substantial-risk information is reported to EPA.

(3) The September 9 proposal stated, in Part III, that a person obtains information when he is aware that it "may suggest" substantial risk. Numerous commenters questioned the Administrator's authority to compel the reporting of information which "may suggest" substantial risk. The Administrator agrees that section 8(e) addresses information that "reasonably supports the conclusion" of substantial risk and has deleted the "may suggest" provision, but emphasizes that "reasonably supports the conclusion" of substantial risk is not identical to a conclusive demonstration of substantial risk. The former typically occurs, and must be reported, at an earlier stage. Part VI in this policy statement provides Agency interpretation of the types of information that "reasonably support" such a conclusion.

(4) Numerous commenters requested clarification of different aspects of Part V of the September 9 proposal ("Information Which Reasonably Supports a Conclusion of Substantial Risk"), particularly concerning environmental effects, and suggested different interpretations of what constitutes a "substantial risk". The Agency continues to focus in this policy statement on the effects set forth in the September 9 proposal, but clarifies that the substantiality of a risk is a function of both the seriousness of the effect and the probability of its occurrence (see Part V).

(5) Numerous commenters maintained that section 8(e) only applies prospectively to information obtained after January 1, 1977. The Agency disagrees, as explained in the preamble to the September 9 proposal. This policy statement continues to apply section 8(e) to information obtained before 1977 of which a person has

been aware since January 1, 1977. In response to requests for clarification, the statement defines what constitutes such awareness. In this manner, EPA intends to limit the need for searches of historical records and files.

(6) This policy statement now provides that any information published in scientific literature, in any language, is exempt if it is referred to in abstracts published by specified abstracting services.

(7) This policy statement describes in a new Part X how to submit claims of confidentiality.

Accordingly, the Administrator's interpretation of and policy towards section 8(e) is set forth below.

Dated: February 24, 1978.

DOUGLAS COSTLE
Administrator.

I. DEFINITIONS

The definitions set forth in TSCA section 3 apply to these requirements. In addition, the following definitions are provided for purposes of this policy statement:

The term "manufacture or process 'for commercial purposes' " means to manufacture or process: (1) For distribution in commerce, including for test marketing purposes, (2) for use as a catalyst or an intermediate, (3) for the exclusive use by the manufacturer or processor, or (4) for product research and development.

The term "person" includes any natural person, corporation, firm, company, joint-venture, partnership, sole proprietorship, association, or any other business entity, any State or political subdivision thereof, any municipality, any interstate body and any department, agency, or instrumentality of the Federal Government.

The term "substantial-risk information" means information which reasonably supports the conclusion that a chemical substance or mixture presents a substantial risk of injury to health or the environment.

II. PERSONS SUBJECT TO THE REQUIREMENT

Persons subject to section 8(e) requirements include both natural persons and business entities engaged in manufacturing, processing, or distributing in commerce a chemical substance or mixture. In the case of business entities, the president, chief executive officer, and any other officers responsible and having authority for the organization's execution of its section 8(e) obligations must ensure that the organization reports substantial-risk information to EPA. The business organization is considered to have obtained any information which any officer or employee capable of appreciating the significance of that information has obtained. It is therefore incumbent upon business organizations to establish procedures for expeditiously processing pertinent information in order to comply with the schedule set forth in Part IV.

Those officers and employees of business organizations who are capable of appreciating the significance of pertinent information are also subject to these reporting requirements. An employing organization may relieve its individual officers and employees of any responsibility for reporting substantial-risk information directly to EPA by establishing, internally publicizing, and affirmatively implementing procedures for employee submission and corporate processing of pertinent information. These procedures, at a minimum, must: (1) Specify the information that officers and employees must submit; (2) indicate how such submissions are to be prepared and the company official to whom they are to be submitted; (3) note the Federal penalties for failing to report; and (4) provide a mechanism for promptly advising officers and employees in writing of the company's disposition of the report, including whether or not the report was submitted to EPA (and if not informing employees of their right to report to EPA, as protected by TSCA section 23). An employee of any company that has established and publicized such procedures, who has internally submitted pertinent information in accordance with them, shall have discharged his section 8(e) obligation. Establishment of such procedures notwithstanding, all officials responsible and having authority for the organization's execution of its section 8(e) obligations retain personal liability for ensuring that the appropriate substantial-risk information is reported to EPA.

Business organizations that do not establish such procedures cannot relieve their individual officers and employees of the responsiblity for ensuring that substantial-risk information they obtain is reported to EPA. While officers and employees of such organizations may also elect to submit substantial-risk information to their superiors for corporate processing and reporting, rather than to EPA directly, they have not discharged their individual section 8(e) obligation until EPA has received the information.

NOTE.—Irrespective of a business organization's decision to establish and publicize the procedures described above, it is responsible for becoming cognizant of any substantial-risk information obtained by its officers and employees, and for ensuring that such information is reported to EPA within 15 working days.

III. WHEN A PERSON WILL BE REGARDED AS HAVING OBTAINED INFORMATION

A person obtains substantial-risk information at the time he first comes into possession of or knows of such information.

NOTE.—This includes information of which a prudent person similarly situated could reasonably be expected to possess or have knowledge.

An establishment obtains information at the time any officer or employee capable of appreciating the significance of such information obtains it.

IV. REQUIREMENT THAT A PERSON "IMMEDIATELY INFORM" THE ADMINISTRATOR

With the exception of information on emergency incidents of environmental contamination [see Part V(c)] a person has "immediately informed" the Administrator if information is received by EPA not later than the 15th working day after the date the person obtained such information. Supplementary information generated after a section 8(e) notification should, if appropriate, be immediately reported. For emergency incidents of environmental contamination, a person shall report the incident to the Administrator by telephone as soon as he has knowledge of the incident (see Part IX for appropriate telephone contacts). The report should contain as much of the information required by Part IX as possible. A written report in accordance with Part IX (a) through (f) is to be submitted within 15 days.

Information currently in the possession of a person who is subject to reporting must be reported within 60 days of publication of this policy statement.

V. WHAT CONSTITUTES SUBSTANTIAL RISKS

A "substantial risk of injury to health or the environment" is a risk of considerable concern because of (a) the seriousness of the effect [see Subparts (a), (b), and (c) below for an illustrative list of effects of concern], and (b) the fact or probability of its occurrence. (Economic or social benefits of use, or costs of restricting use, are not to be considered in determining whether a risk is "substantial".) These two criteria are differentially weighted for different types of effects. The human health effects listed in Subpart (a) below, for example, are so serious that relatively little weight is given to exposure; the mere fact the implicated chemical is in commerce constitutes sufficient evidence of exposure. In contrast, the remaining effects listed in Subparts (b) and (c) below must involve, or be accompanied by the potential for, significant levels of exposure (because of general production levels, persistence, typical uses, common means of disposal, or other pertinent factors).

Note that: (i) The effects outlined below should not be reported if the re-

spondent has actual knowledge that the Administrator is already informed of them.

(ii) Information respecting these effects can be obtained either directly, by observation of their occurrence, or inferred from designed studies as discussed in Part VI.

The Agency considers effects for which substantial-risk information must be reported to include the following:

(a) *Human health effects*—(1) Any instance of cancer, birth defects, mutagenicity, death, or serious or prolonged incapacitation, including the loss of or inability to use a normal bodily function with a consequent relatively serious impairment of normal activities, if one (or a few) chemical(s) is strongly implicated.

(2) Any pattern of effects or evidence which reasonably supports the conclusion that the chemical substance or mixture can produce cancer, mutation, birth defects or toxic effects resulting in death, or serious or prolonged incapacitation.

(b) *Environmental effects*—(1) Widespread and previously unsuspected distribution in environmental media, as indicated in studies (excluding materials contained within appropriate disposal facilities).

(2) Pronounced bioaccumulation. Measurements and indicators of pronounced bioaccumulation heretofore unknown to the Administrator (including bioaccumulation in fish beyond 5,000 times water concentration in a 30-day exposure or having an n-octanol/water partition coefficient greater than 25,000) should be reported when coupled with potential for widespread exposure and any non-trivial adverse effect.

(3) Any non-trivial adverse effect, heretofore unknown to the Administrator, associated with a chemical known to have bioaccumulated to a pronounced degree or to be widespread in environmental media.

(4) Ecologically significant changes in species' interrelationships; that is, changes in population behavior, growth, survival, etc. that in turn affect other species' behavior, growth, or survival.

Examples include: (i) Excessive stimulation of primary producers (algae, macrophytes) in aquatic ecosystems, e.g., resulting in nutrient enrichment, or eutrophication, of aquatic ecosystems.

(ii) Interference with critical biogeochemical cycles, such as the nitrogen cycle.

(5) Facile transformation or degradation to a chemical having an unacceptable risk as defined above.

(c) *Emergency incidents of environmental contamination*—Any environmental contamination by a chemical substance or mixture to which any of the above adverse effects has been ascribed and which because of the pattern, extent, and amount of contamination (1) seriously threatens humans with cancer, birth defects, mutation, death, or serious or prolonged incapacitation, or (2) seriously threatens non-human organisms with large-scale or ecologically significant population destruction.

VI. Nature and Sources of Information Which "Reasonably Supports the Conclusion" of Substantial Risk

Information attributing any of the effects described in Part V above to a chemical substance or mixture is to be reported if it is one of the types listed below and if it is not exempt from the reporting requirement by reason of Part VII of this policy statement. A person is not to delay reporting until he obtains conclusive information that a substantial risk exists, but is to immediately report any evidence which "reasonably supports" that conclusion. Such evidence will generally not be conclusive as to the substantiality of the risk; it should, however, reliably ascribe the effect to the chemical.

Information from the following sources concerning the effects described in Part V will often "reasonably support" a conclusion of substantial risk. Consideration of corroborative information before reporting can only occur where it is indicated below.

(1) *Designed, controlled studies.* In assessing the quality of information, the respondent is to consider whether it contains reliable evidence ascribing the effect to the chemical. Not only should final results from such studies be reported, but also preliminary results from incomplete studies where appropriate. Designed, controlled studies include:

(i) In vivo experiments and tests.

(ii) In vitro experiments and tests. Consideration may be given to the existence of corroborative information, if necessary to reasonably support the conclusion that a chemical presents a substantial risk.

(iii) Epidemiological studies.

(iv) Environmental monitoring studies.

(2) *Reports concerning and studies of undesigned, uncontrolled circumstances.* It is anticipated here that reportable effects will generally occur in a pattern, where a significant common feature is exposure to the chemical. However, a single instance of cancer, birth defects, mutation, death, or serious incapacitation in a human would be reportable if one (or a few) chemical(s) was strongly implicated. In addition, it is possible that effects less serious than those described in Part V(a) may be preliminary manifestations of the more serious effects and, together with another triggering piece of information, constitute reportable information; an example would be a group of exposed workers experiencing dizziness together with preliminary experimental results demonstrating neurological dysfunctions.

Reports and studies of undesigned circumstances include:

(i) Medical and health surveys.

(ii) Clinical studies.

(iii) Reports concerning and evidence of effects in consumers, workers, or the environment.

VII. Information Which Need Not Be Reported

Information need not be reported if it:

(a) Has been published by EPA in reports;

(b) Has been submitted in writing to EPA pursuant to mandatory reporting requirements under TSCA or any other authority administered by EPA (including the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, the Clean Air Act, the Federal Water Pollution Control Act, the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act), provided that the information: (1) Encompasses that required by Part IX (c) through (f); and (2) is from now on submitted within the time constraints set forth in Part IV and identified as a section 8(e) notice in accordance with Part IX(b);

(c) Has been published in the scientific literature and referenced by the following abstract services: (1) Agricola, (2) Biological Abstracts, (3) Chemical Abstracts, (4) Dissertation Abstracts, (5) Index Medicus, (6) National Technical Information Service.

(d) Is corroborative of well-established adverse effects already documented in the scientific literature and referenced as described in (c) above, unless such information concerns emergency incidents of environmental contamination as described in Part V(c), or

(e) Is contained in notification of spills under section 311(b)(5) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act.

VIII. Information First Received by a Person Prior to the Effective Date of TSCA

Any substantial risk information possessed by a person prior to January 1, 1977, of which he is aware after that date shall be reported within 60 days of publication of this policy statement. The Agency considers that a person is "aware" of:

(a) Any information reviewed after January 1, 1977, including not only written reports, memoranda and other documents examined after January 1, 1977, but also information referred to in discussions and conferences in which the person participated after January 1, 1977;

(b) Any information the contents of which a person has been alerted to by date received after January 1, 1977, including any information concerning a chemical for which the person is presently assessing health and environmental effects;

(c) Any other information of which the person has actual knowledge.

IX. Reporting Requirements

Notices shall be delivered to the Document Control Officer, Chemical Information Division, Office of Toxic Substances (WH-557), Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20460.

A notice should:

(a) Be sent by certified mail, or in any other way permitting verification of its receipt by the Agency,

(b) State that it is being submitted in accordance with section 8(e),

(c) Contain the job title, name, address, telephone number, and signature of the person reporting and the name and address of the manufacturing, processing, or distributing establishment with which he is associated,

(d) Identify the chemical substance or mixture (including, if known, the CAS Registry Number),

(e) Summarize the adverse effects being reported, describing the nature and the extent of the risk involved, and

(f) Contain the specific source of the information together with a summary and the source of any available supporting technical data.

For emergency incidents of environmental contamination (see Part V(c)), a person shall report the incident to the Administrator by telephone as soon as he has knowledge of the incident (see below for appropriate telephone contacts). The report should contain as much of the information required by instructions (b) through (f) above as possible. A written report, in accordance with instructions (a) through (f) above, is to be submitted within 15 days. Twenty-four hour emergency telephone numbers are:

Region I (Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire), 617-223-7265.
Region II (New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands), 201-548-8730.
Region III (Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia), 215-597-9898.
Region IV (Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida), 404-881-4062.
Region V (Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota), 312-353-2318.
Region VI (New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana), 214-749-3840.
Region VII (Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas), 816-374-3778.
Region VIII (Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota), 303-837-3880.
Region IX (California, Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii, Guam), 415-556-6254.
Region X (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska), 206-442-1200.

X. Confidentiality Claims

(a) Any person submitting a notice to EPA under section 8(e) of TSCA may assert a business confidentiality claim covering all or part of the information contained in the notice. Any information covered by a claim will be disclosed by EPA only to the extent, and by means of the procedures, set forth in 40 CFR Part 2 (41 FR 36902, September 1, 1976).

(b) If no claim accompanies the notice at the time it is submitted to EPA, the notice will be placed in an open file to be available to the public without further notice to the submitter.

(c) To assert a claim of confidentiality for information contained in a notice, the submitter must submit two copies of the notice.

(1) One copy must be complete. In that copy the submitter must indicate what information, if any, is claimed as confidential by marking the specified information on each page with a label such as "confidential," "proprietary," or "trade secret."

(2) If some information in the notice is claimed as confidential, the submitter must submit a second copy. The second copy must be complete except that all information claimed as confidential in the first copy must be deleted.

(3) The first copy of the notice will be disclosed by EPA only to the extent, and by means of the procedures, set forth in 40 CFR Part 2. The second copy will be placed in an open file to be available to the public.

(d) Any person submitting a notice containing information for which they are asserting a confidentiality claim should send the notice in a double envelope.

(1) The outside envelope should bear the same address outlined in section IX of this policy statement.

(2) The inside envelope should be clearly marked "To be opened only by the OTS Document Control Officer."

XI. Failure To Report Information

Section 15(3) of TSCA makes it unlawful for any person to fail or refuse to submit information required under section 8(e). Section 16 provides that a violation of section 15 renders a person liable to the United States for a civil penalty and possible criminal prosecution. Pursuant to section 17, the Government may seek judicial relief to compel submittal of section 8(e) information and to otherwise restrain any violation of section 8(e).

Appendix A.—Quick Reference Summary for Emergency Incidents of Environmental Contamination

A. What should be reported as an emergency incident

An emergency incident of environmental contamination is "any environmental contamination by a chemical substance or mixture . . . which, because of the pattern, extent and amount of contamination, (1) Seriously threatens humans with cancer, birth defects, mutation, death, or serious or prolonged incapacitation, or (2) seriously threatens non-human organisms with large scale or ecologically significant population destruction". (See Part V(c) for complete description.)

B. What need not be reported as an emergency incident

Information contained in notification of spills under section 311(b)(5) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (FWPCA). (For a complete list of exemptions to reporting, see Part VII.)

C. When and where to report emergency incidents

Emergency incidents of environmental contamination are to be reported immediately by telephone to the appropriate EPA Regional 24-hour telephone emergency line listed below.

Region I (Maine, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire), 617-223-7265.
Region II (New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands), 201-548-8730.
Region III (Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia), 215-597-9898.
Region IV (Kentucky, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida), 404-881-4062.
Region V (Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota), 312-353-2318.
Region VI (New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Louisiana), 214-749-3840.
Region VII (Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas), 816-374-3778.
Region VIII (Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota), 303-837-3880.
Region IX (California, Nevada, Arizona, Hawaii, Guam), 415-556-6254.
Region X (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Alaska), 206-442-1200.

In addition, a written report, in accordance with instructions (a) through (f) of Part IX, is to be submitted within 15 days to the Document Control Officer, Chemical Information Division, Office of Toxic Substances (WH-557), 401 M Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20460.

Appendix B—Significant Comments and Responses

A. Persons subject to these requirements

Comment 1: Employees cannot be held subject to these requirements, since: (a) They only have a partial role in the manufacture, processing, or distribution of chemicals, (b) in other sections of TSCA, the term "person who manufactures, processes, or distributes" chemicals clearly refers to business organizations; "persons" should be consistently defined, and (c) the application of criminal penalties mandates a strict interpretation of this word.

Response: The Agency considers that different sections of TSCA, having different purposes, are appropriately directed to different respondents. In the case of section 8(e), officers and employees who are capable of appreciating the significance of information have a legitimate responsibility to be alert to and report substantial-risk information. The guidance has been modified so that natural persons and business entities can fulfill their section 8(e) obligations in different ways. Most officers and employees can discharge their section 8(e) obligations by submitting pertinent information to corporate superiors, provided that the company has established the risk-evaluation procedures characterized in Part II. In the case of a business organization, its president, chief executive officer, and other officials responsible and having authority for the business organization's execution of its section 8(e) obligations must ensure that the organization reports substantial-risk information to EPA.

Comment 2: Even if employees can be held subject to these requirements, they should not be. To do so would force employees and employers into conflicting positions, inviting internal corporate dissension and over- reporting. Further, individuals often do not have the overview necessary to reach considered, well-supported decisions. Corporate reporting by designated officials will provide EPA with more reliable data.

Response: The Agency considers that employees have a legitimate role in risk reporting; it is imperative that risk information obtained by employees be appropriately considered. Officers and employees can fulfill their role in the reporting of substantial-risk information, without the disadvantages described above, by reporting information to superiors for corporate consideration, and, having done so, will have discharged their obligation to EPA. This is contingent upon the establishment by the business organization of certain procedures for risk-evaluation, thereby assuring the appropriate consideration of such reports. Those officers responsible and having authority for the organization's execution of its section 8(e) obligations must ensure that the organization reports substantial-risk information to EPA.

Comment 3: Clarify which employees are covered, and the extent of their obligation. Are employees "capable of appreciating pertinent information" by virtue of rank, or knowledge? Are rank and file employees subject to these requirements, or just supervisory and managerial personnel, company toxicologists, etc.? Is an employee absolved of further responsibility if he reports to his supervisor?

Response: The Agency considers that the phrase "capable of appreciating the significance of pertinent information" appropriately describes those officers and employees who have a responsibility to be alert to and report substantial-risk information, including not only relatively senior corporate officers but also many corporate employees. The policy statement modifies the September 9 proposal, in response to the concerns expressed in Comments 2 and 3, to permit most officers and employees to discharge their obligation by submitting information to corporate superiors, subject to the conditions described in Part II.

Comment 4: Consultants and independent labs should not be subject to these requirements.

Response: Contractors and independent labs are not responsible for reporting information they have obtained directly to EPA; rather, their client manufacturers, processors and distributors are responsible for reporting such information.

B. THE "OBTAINING" OF INFORMATION

Comment 5: The "may suggest" criterion in Part III of the proposal serves to compel further examination of information that by itself is not subject to section 8(e) requirements. The statutory language calling for "reasonable support" does not support this. Further, risk assessment often requires anywhere from months to several years of study after preliminary results "suggest" risk, far exceeding the 15-day compliance period.

Response: The Agency does not intend to compel under section 8(e) examination of information that by itself is not subject to section 8(e) requirements and has deleted the "may suggest" provision, providing its interpretation of what constitutes evidence that "reasonably supports the conclusion" of substantial risk in a new Part VI.

Comment 6: Section 8(e) obligations are incurred upon obtaining conclusory substantial-risk information.

Response: The Agency disagrees, and considers that "reasonable support" of a conclusion of substantial risk is not identical to the conclusion itself. The former typically occurs, and must be reported, at an earlier stage.

Comment 7: The statement, in Part III of the proposal that a person has obtained information if he ". . . should know of the existence of such information not in his possession but which would be delivered to him on request," tends to compel an active search for substantial-risk information rather than the reporting of substantial-risk information a person "obtains." This is of particular concern to importers with limited access to information possessed by their suppliers.

Response: The Agency considers that section 8(e) applies to information which a person possesses or of which he knows. It is not intended to compel searches for information or extraordinary efforts to acquire information. The Agency further considers, however, that "known" information includes information which a prudent person similarly situated could reasonably be expected to know. Negligence or intentional avoidance of information does not absolve a person of his section 8(e) obligation. Part III has been modified to express these intentions.

Comment 8: Circumstances can exist when coming "into possession" of risk information does not correspond to an understanding of the implications of the information; "obtains" should be defined in terms of possession of information and awareness of its import.

Response: The "obtaining" of information occurs via persons who are "capable of appreciating the significance of pertinent information." There will likely be circumstances in which the evaluation of information clarifies its full import; the establishment of corporate procedures for processing risk-information prescribed in Part II will expedite this.

C. TIME ALLOWED FOR COMPLIANCE

Comment 9: Fifteen calendar days is insufficient to determine whether information which "may suggest" substantial risk should be reported; it is even insufficient to accommodate normal procedural time constraints (corporate processing, mailing, holidays, etc.).

Response: The Agency has changed the compliance period to 15 business days. It is imperative that procedures be established to expedite the reporting of substantial-risk information, not that reporting conform to existing procedures.

Comment 10: Allow from 30 to 90 days for the second phase of reporting; alternatively, do not prescribe a time limit for additional reporting.

Response: Having deleted the "may suggest" criterion, the Agency sees no need to provide a second phase to the reporting period. Supplemental information that is generated after a section 8(e) notification should, if appropriate, be immediately reported.

Comment 11: Allow from 30 to 120 days to report pre-1977 information; this period should commence: (a) upon final publication, (b) January 1, 1978, (c) following the inventory reporting period since many of the same corporate personnel will be implementing both requirements.

Response: The policy statement prescribes a 60 day reporting period, commencing immediately upon publication. Section 8(e) has been in effect since January 1, 1977; postponement in reporting substantial-risk information is not warranted.

D. EFFECTS AND INFORMATION THAT MUST BE REPORTED

Comment 12: The reporting of "any instance" of cancer, birth defects, etc., in humans is too broad and such information will be of little use; chemical workers, like the general population, develop cancers and other ailments of uncertain etiology.

Response: This policy statement clarifies that the reporting of single occurrences of human cancer or other serious effects will depend upon evidence strongly implicating one (or a few) chemical(s).

Comment 13: Dermal ailments and nausea are poorly chosen examples of precursor symptoms. Deleting these examples will avoid unduly emphasizing them when other symptoms may be more important, yet will not eliminate the obligation to report them if they are suspected precursors.

Response: The Agency agrees.

Comment 14: How are reportable data distinguished from routine tests including range tests such as LD_{50}'s?

Response: This policy statement directs the reporting of specified effects when unknown to the Administrator. Many routine tests are based on a knowledge of toxicity associated with a chemical; unknown effects occurring during such a range test may have to be reported if they are those of concern to the Agency and if the information meets the criteria set forth in Parts V and VI.

Comment 15: The most widespread "in vitro" test is the Ames test, which is subject to considerable debate. Clarify the circumstances under which positive results of in vitro tests must be reported.

Response: Part VI clarifies that the reporting of in vitro tests will depend upon the existence of corroborative information if necessary to reasonably support the conclusion of substantial risk.

Comment 16: The description of "extreme persistence" as a substantial risk is an example of the need to redefine Part V(c) ("Environmental Effects"). Persistence and bioaccumulation should be considered risks only when coupled with toxicity and significant exposure.

Response: Part V now clarifies those effects for which reporting depends upon a significant exposure potential. Persistence by itself is no longer itemized as a reportable effect but rather is considered to be a component of exposure potential; it may also underlie the measurements described in Part V(b)(1). Laboratory indicators of pronounced bioaccumulation are to be reported when coupled with potential for widespread exposure and any non-trivial adverse effect.

Comment 17: The n-octanol/water partition coefficient addresses a physico-chemical property, not biological effects, and is not alone an indicator of substantial risk; further, the values stated for the coefficient and the bioaccumulation factor in fish do not correspond.

Response: The Agency acknowledges the numerical error and has amended the values to correspond. This policy statement now directs the reporting of an experimental measurement of bioaccumulation when coupled with an adverse effect and potential for widespread exposure.

Comment 18: The requirement that information which "links" an effect to a chemical be reported is too broad and contradicts the statutory language of "reasonably supports".

Response: The Agency has provided in a new Part VI its interpretation of "reasonably supports".

Comment 19: A determination that information "reasonably supports the conclusion" of substantial risk cannot be made independently of considerations of use since the method and manner of using a chemical may influence the occurrence of an effect; in particular, the criteria should reflect a distinction between normal and abnormal uses of chemicals.

Response: The Agency considers that the appropriate components of a "substantial risk" with respect to a chemical are (a) the seriousness of the effect, and (b) total exposure potential. The method and manner of using a chemical is one of several factors determining its exposure potential. As described in Part V, the importance of exposure potential as a component of "substantial risk" depends upon the kind of effect of concern. Thus, the effects described in Part V(a) are so serious that relatively little weight is given to exposure; the effects described in Parts V (b) and (c) involve a significant exposure or exposure potential.

The Agency further considers that a definition of "normal" use for a particular chemical will often depend upon a knowledge of the risks associated with the chemical.

E. INFORMATION THAT NEED NOT BE REPORTED

Comment 20: Information published in scientific literature in languages other than English should be exempted if published in summary form by abstracting services. Can the accuracy of English language abstracts and commercial translations of foreign literature be assumed?

Response: This policy statement now provides that information published in scientific literature, whether in English or another language, is exempt from reporting if published in summary form by certain specified abstract services.

Comment 21: Information exchange systems with other Federal agencies should be immediately established so that respondents need not report to EPA information already reported to other Agencies, and vice versa. Such duplicative reports are unduly burdensome.

Response: EPA is coordinating this program with other agencies now. When this coordination is successfully completed, the policy statement will be amended to exempt from the reporting requirement information that has been submitted to other specified agencies. In the meantime, substantial-risk information must be reported directly to EPA; such a report does not discharge any reporting obligation to other agencies.

F. INFORMATION FIRST RECEIVED PRIOR TO THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF TSCA

Comment 22: The tense of the verb "obtains" reveals that section 8(e) was intended to be applied prospectively to information newly acquired after January 1, 1977. Utilize section 8(d) or other rules to acquire information obtained before then.

Response: As discussed in the preamble to the September 9 proposal, the Agency considers section 8(e) to apply to risk information possessed by or known to a person before, on, or after January 1, 1977. Concerning information first obtained before 1977, this policy statement continues to require reporting of information received if a person has been aware of it since January 1, 1977, for the reasons discussed in the September 9 preamble.

Comment 23: The term "aware" is too vague to be of any help in responding to these requirements. Since many corporate employees are potentially subject to these requirements, and given uncertainty over the extent to which they ought to be aware of pre-1977 information, this provision tends to compel the very file search it was intended to avoid. The term "aware" should be further defined, possibly in terms of actual knowledge.

Response: The Agency in Part VIII of this policy statement now defines the pre-1977 information of which a person is considered to be aware.

G. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Comment 24: EPA should delay guidance until procedures are published governing the treatment of confidential submissions.

Comment 25: EPA should treat all submissions as confidential until the information is verified.

Comment 26: EPA should automatically publish section 8(e) notices.

Response to Comments 24 through 26: EPA has included a new Part X which describes how to submit a claim of confidentiality and states that any or all of the information submitted may be claimed as confidential. Such information will be disclosed by EPA only to the extent, and by means of the procedures, set forth in 40 CFR Part 2.

H. MISCELLANEOUS

Comment 27: What is the statutory basis or need for guidance? What is its exact status under the Administrative Procedure Act?

Response: This policy statement sets forth EPA's interpretation of and policy concerning TSCA section 8(e). As an interpretive rule and statement of policy it is not subject to the comment period and delayed effective date provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. 553). Although TSCA does not mandate a policy statement, the Agency of necessity must develop the criteria which will govern enforcement activities. Trade associations and businesses were among those who previously expressed interest in such a statement to guide their compliance.

Comment 28: Clarify whether these requirements apply to chemicals previously but no longer manufactured, processed, or distributed in commerce by a person.

Response: Information obtained before 1977 must be reported if the person has been aware of it since January 1, 1977, as prescribed by Part VIII. Concerning chemicals which a person has discontinued manufacturing, processing, or distributing since January 1, 1977, information obtained before the time of discontinuation is subject to these requirements. It is expected that the acquisition of information after that time will be minimal; however, should additional information be acquired, it may trigger the reporting described in Part VIII.

Comment 29: Clarify the meaning of "substantial risk" relative to other risks addressed by TSCA.

Response: A substantial risk is defined in Part V(a) of this policy statement as a risk of considerable concern because of (a) the seriousness of the effect, and (b) the fact or probability of its occurrence. As opposed to other risks addressed by TSCA, economic or social benefits of use, or costs of restricting use, are not to be considered in determining whether a risk is "substantial".

Comment 30: To what extent are "users" of chemicals subject to these requirements?

Response: The Agency considers that many industrial uses of chemicals actually fall within the scope of "processing" chemicals. A manufacturer, processor, or distributor who obtains substantial-risk information concerning chemicals he handles should be alert to the possibility he may have to report it.

Comment 31: Are chemicals manufactured, processed and distributed in commerce in small quantities solely for purposes of research and development subject to these requirements?

Response: In general, the Agency considers that much manufacturing, processing, and distribution in commerce of chemicals in small quantities solely for purposes of research and development is conducted for "commercial purposes". Such purposes would include the sale and distribution of such materials, as well as their use by the manufacturer or processor in activities (for example, product research and development and studies assessing the feasibility and safety of using chemicals) preceding his or a client's commercial use of such materials or others on a larger scale.

As described in Part V, the Agency considers that "substantial risks" depend in part upon an exposure potential. Thus, the occurrence of the effects described in Part V(a) presuppose exposure to the chemical and must be reported; reporting of the other effects will depend upon a potential for significant levels of exposure.

Comment 32: Are raw materials, intermediates, and inert ingredients produced or used in the manufacture of a pesticide subject to TSCA?

Response: The Administrator considers that raw materials, intermediates and inert ingredients produced or used in the manufacture of a pesticide are substances or mixtures which can be regulated under TSCA.

In order to be considered a pesticide, a substance must be intended for use as a pesticide. Raw materials, intermediates, and inert ingredients produced or used in the manufacture of a pesticide are not themselves regulated under FIFRA (unless they happen to be pesticides themselves) and, therefore, are subject to TSCA. The pesti-

cide regulations at 40 CFR 162.4 are consistent with this view.

Comment 33: Are intermediates and catalysts intended solely for use in the production of a food, food additive, drug, cosmetic, or device subject to TSCA?

Response: The Administrator considers that intermediates and catalysts intended solely for use in the production of a food, food additive, drug, cosmetic, or device are excluded from regulation under TSCA. The definitions of the FFDCA provide that chemical substances which are intended for use as a component of a food, food additive, drug, cosmetic, or device are encompassed within the meaning of such terms, respectively. The FDA considers intermediates and catalysts to be such components. Therefore, they are subject to regulation under the FFDCA. Any such substance is excluded from regulation under TSCA insofar as it is actually manufactured, processed, or distributed in commerce solely for use in the production of a food, food additive, drug, cosmetic, or device.

Comment 34: Employees should have the option to submit reports anonymously.

Response: EPA considers that any person may report information to EPA under TSCA. Those who are required to do so under section 8(e) are persons who manufacture, process, or distribute in commerce chemical substances or mixtures, including not only business entities but also such employees as described in Part II. In order to establish that such persons have discharged their obligations, and in order to encourage responsible review of the quality of information and the substantiality of risks, EPA believes that notifiers should identify themselves. Section 23 will adequately protect employees from discrimination pursuant to notifications they have made under section 8(e).

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